

Medicare's New Preventive Benefits

On January 1, 2005, Medicare began covering three new preventative benefits:

☒ **One-time "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam for people new to Medicare.**

If your Medicare Part B coverage begins after January 1, 2005, Medicare will cover a one-time preventive physical exam within the first six months that you have Part B. The exam will include a review of your health; education and counseling about preventive services you need, like certain screening for cancer and shots; and referrals for other care.

☒ **Cardiovascular Screening:** Medicare covers cardiovascular screenings that check your cholesterol and other blood fat levels.

☒ **Diabetes Screening:** For people with Medicare at risk for getting diabetes, Medicare covers a blood sugar test to check for diabetes, and possibly up to two screenings each year.

☒ **Disease Management:** Programs will now be available to keep seniors healthy who are at risk for asthma, cancer, arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, mental illness and other chronic conditions.

For more information call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.



U.S. SENATOR
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**To learn more about the new
Medicare prescription drug
coverage, contact my office at
1-800-234-4208 or call
1-800-MEDICARE.
<http://www.MEDICARE.gov>**



**IMPORTANT NEWS
FOR GEORGIA
SENIORS ABOUT
THE NEW
MEDICARE
PRESCRIPTION
DRUG COVERAGE**

**FROM
U.S. SENATOR
SAXBY CHAMBLISS**

Dear Georgia Senior:

Last year, Congress made some important changes to Medicare, and I want to be sure you are well informed.

After 40 years of providing dependable coverage for doctor visits, hospital stays and life-saving surgeries, Medicare now covers a "Welcome to Medicare" physical and preventive cardiovascular and diabetes screenings. In addition, Medicare will offer dependable coverage for prescription drugs beginning January 1, 2006, which is designed to help save you money on your prescription drugs and reduce your costs.

While these changes are 100% voluntary, you need to sign up to participate. Should you have additional questions about these programs, please call 1-800-MEDICARE for more details.

Very truly yours,



Saxby Chambliss
United States Senate

KEY FACTS ABOUT MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

✓ **Everyone with Medicare is eligible for the new prescription drug coverage, regardless of income level and resources, pre-existing conditions, or current prescription expenses.** Participating in the program is 100 percent voluntarily and you choose the best plan that meets your needs.

✓ **Medicare prescription drug coverage can help by covering both brand name and generic drugs at participating pharmacies close to where you live.** A typical person with Medicare could see his or her total drug costs drop by about 50% and people with limited income and resources may have almost no drug expenses.

✓ **Medicare prescription drug coverage is insurance from private companies.** You can choose the drug plan that is best for you. You pay a monthly premium and when you join a plan, Medicare helps pay the bill.

✓ **Each plan will differ in terms of cost and coverage.** If you already have drug coverage through an employer or union plan or Medicare Health Plan (Medicare Advantage plan or Medicare Cost plan), Medicare can help reduce your costs.

✓ **How to join.** You can join a Medicare prescription drug plan from November 15, 2005 through May 15, 2006. Enrollment is voluntary. However, just like other insurance plans, you can pay less if you don't wait to sign up. So if you sign up before May 15, 2006, your costs may be lower.

To learn more about the new Medicare prescription drug coverage, contact my office at 1-800-234-4208 or call 1-800-MEDICARE.